



The Journal

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December 22, 2016



Director's Column

As we celebrate this festive season and another year draws to an end, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you in the Walter Reed Bethesda Family for what you have accomplished in 2016. Take pride in what you do each and every day here at the “Flagship of Military Medicine.” Your selfless service and sacrifice make it possible for us to deliver the finest health care to the most deserving beneficiaries – our nation’s heroes and their families. We do with the intent on providing an extraordinary patient experience for every patient, every time.

In November, we celebrated our fifth anniversary as Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. Five years ago we merged the legacies of two distinguished Medical Centers, Walter Reed Army Medical Center and National Naval Medical Center, into one exceptional institution. We are continuing to build upon the legacies of WRAMC and NNMC to become the foremost institution in the world for the teaching and practice of military medicine.

I remain proud of how we partnered with other military treatment facilities throughout the National Capital Region to provide excellent care and services to our many beneficiaries this year. Our patients, our parent services and Congress demand we live up to the commitment our nation has made to those who have sacrificed so much for our freedoms. In order to do this, we must not think of ourselves as one hospital with 41,000 patients to care for. We must think of our role within the NCR health system as one of 12 practice locations caring for more than 237,000 lives while ensuring a ready medical force of nearly 11,000 Sailors, Airmen and Soldiers. This



**Col. Michael S. Heimall,
Director Walter Reed National
Military Medical Center**

year, WRNMMC alone has had more than 990,000 patient visits; nearly 14,600 admissions; and over 1,300 births.

On an average day at WRNMMC this year, we had nearly 4,000 ambulatory visits, over 500 radiologic studies, filled more than 4,000 prescriptions, performed nearly 9,000 lab tests, and served more than 4,000 meals.

Our staff at WRNMMC led the way in providing exceptional care to our patients and Veterans, including a less invasive heart procedure, Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR), which has a faster recovery time than traditional open heart surgery. In addition, the John P. Murtha Cancer Center of Excellence continues to be at the forefront of cancer research and treatment. In June, the MCC served as one of the hosts for the national White House-sponsored Cancer Moonshot Summit. The goal

of the Moonshot is to speed efforts for cancer research, treatment and cures in hopes of discovering a cure for cancer within the next decade. Also, our 3-D Medical Applications Center remained at the forefront of life-enhancing innovations in computer design to benefit service members and others. The National Intrepid Center of Excellence at WRNMMC also continued to provide hope, healing, discovery and learning for traumatic brain injury and psychological health.

Also this year, WRNMMC continued to deploy our service members globally, who provided care and services to those in need, as well as strengthen ties with our friends and allies around the world for future operations and exercises. On any average day during 2016, more than 100 military staff members from WRNMMC are deployed providing services somewhere around the globe.

In May, our Department of Research hosted its annual Research and Innovation Month activities, highlighting the extensive and extraordinary depth and breadth of cutting-edge research conducted by WRNMMC staff. And in June, we graduated another class of interns, residents and fellows from the National Capital Consortium, whose graduates will make up the future force of the Military Health System professionals. Also this year, we frocked a number of our Sailors, as well as welcomed many of our Soldiers into the ranks of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps during ceremonies rich in pageantry and tradition.

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Director's Column

Christmas Meal

The Annual Christmas Meal at Walter Reed Bethesda is Dec. 25 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Café 8901 in Bldg. 9, basement level. Cost for the meal is \$9.05 (\$6.80 for dependents of E-4 and below). The meal will include shrimp cocktail; corn and crab bisque; Chicken Napa Valley with Julienne vegetables; Carved Beef Tenderloin Au Jus; Maryland Crab Cake with Mango Salsa; Vegetarian Paella; various accompaniments (salads, potatoes, and more); and desserts (mini white chocolate raspberry cheesecake, Christmas spice cake, sweet potato pie and more).

Holiday Religious Services

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and the Department of Pastoral Care host the following holiday religious services: On Dec. 25, at 9 a.m., a Catholic mass in the Chapel (Liberty Bldg. 8), and a candlelight service at 10:30 a.m. in the Chapel, and on Jan. 1 at 9 a.m., a New Year's Day Catholic mass in the Chapel. For more information, call the Department of Pastoral Care at 301-295-1510.

Fleet, Family Support Center

The Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) on Naval Support Activity Bethesda offers programs intended to assist service members and their families with military life. FFSC's workshops and seminars include: job search strategies for military spouses; federal resume writing; time management; credit management; consumer financial awareness; interview skills; pre-deployment briefings; return and reunion briefings; and more. For more information, call 301-319-4087, or visit FFSC in Bldg. 11, first floor.

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Tips to Prepare for Winter Weather

By Andrew Damstedt
The Journal

With the cold, snow, and ice, wintry weather brings potential hazards, so Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) officials are offering up tips to help keep people safe this winter.

"It's always good to be prepared beforehand; you never know when you're going to be stranded," said NSAB Deputy Emergency Manager Les Hiatt. "This is a very busy area and a lot of things can happen."

While there was only one major snow incident in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area last winter, Hiatt and NSAB Safety Manager Paul Phillips recommended people be prepared for all types of winter weather.

Winter Driving

When driving, Phillips said people should make sure their vehicle is maintained for winter weather, which includes changing to snow tires. He recommended getting an engine tune-up in the fall, having brakes inspected, and making sure lights are working, all vehicle fluids are at proper levels and wiper blades are cleaning properly. Keep gas tank at least half-full.

Avoid driving in hazardous conditions when possible, and remove all ice and snow from vehicle before driving. Make sure to have a planned route as well, he planned.

Drive slowly in icy and snowy conditions – allow at least three times the distance to stop than you would in normal conditions. Don't use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface. If a vehicle starts to skid, take your foot off the accelerator and brakes and steer into the skid – the same direction the back of the vehicle is going.

Hiatt recommended having an emergency safety kit in the car with an extra set of warm clothes, snow boots, snacks, bottled water, first aid kit, flashlight and cell phone charger. He also recommended having a planned route when traveling and expecting heavier traffic during the holidays.

Winter Walking

Phillips gave some advice on how to avoid slips, trips and falls when walking in wintry conditions as many surfaces are wet and/or slippery.

He advised people to wear proper footgear, use handrails when possible, take small steps, walk slowly and never run on icy ground. Walkways should also be kept clear of debris, water, ice and slippery materials.

If falling, try to fall backward and roll with the fall to minimize injury,



PHOTO BY PO2 HANK GETTYS

A worker shovels snow during the only major snowstorm last winter in the National Capital Region.

relax as much as possible and toss items in hand.

Snow and ice removal

When getting rid of ice and snow, Phillips recommended people dress appropriately, use the correct equipment and don't overdo it. Keep an eye out for traffic, such as sliding vehicles and be careful to avoid slips and falls.

Commuting to work

NSAB and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) have mission essential functions so they are staffed 365 days a year, 24/7 regardless of the federal government's operating status, which is determined by the Office of Personnel Management.

All emergency/mission essential employees should report to work as scheduled, but all non-essential personnel should remain home if the federal government changes its operating status, which can be found

at www.opm.gov, or on WRNMMC's website at www.wrnmmc.capmed.mil. People can also call the hospital status line 301-319-8707, or OPM status line 202-606-1900.

Prepare for delays or cancelled routes for public transportation, and look for updates on road conditions through local media. Sign up for alerts from local jurisdictions at www.CapitalRegionUpdates.gov.

Holiday Safety

Some holiday specific guidelines Phillips had were to keep real Christmas trees watered and check for dryness and don't use candles on the trees; use grounded extension cords and keep a fire extinguisher handy. Unplug decorations/lights before going to sleep.

Popular holiday plants such as holly, mistletoe and poinsettia, are toxic so he advised teaching children to keep those out of their mouths and out of reach of young children. Call poison

control for guidance at 1-800-222-1222, and dial 911 for emergencies.

When cooking during the holidays, he said avoid wearing loose-fitting clothing, turn pot handles inward, don't leave kitchen unattended when cooking, don't overload electrical outlets and make sure the kitchen is well-ventilated.

When hosting/attending a holiday party, he said people should have designated drivers and make backup plans that include sober volunteer drivers, taxis, or sleeping arrangements. No one should drink and drive, he said.

Websites for Winter Preparedness

<http://www.ready.navy.mil/>

www.opm.gov

www.wrnmmc.capmed.mil

www.weather.gov/washington/winter

www.ready.gov

www.CapitalRegionUpdates.gov

Holiday Hours

The Liberty Zone, Tickets and Travel Office and Bowling Center will be closed on Christmas and New Year's Day.

The Fitness Center will close at 3 p.m. Dec. 23 and remain closed Dec. 24 to Dec. 26. The Fitness Center will also close at 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 31 and remain closed Jan. 1 and Jan. 2.

The swimming pool closed Dec. 17 and will remain closed through Jan. 2. The pool will reopen at 5 a.m. Jan. 3.

The Personnel Support Detachment offices will be closed Dec. 26 and Jan. 2.

Warrior Café

- Dec 24: 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Dec 25: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; with brunch served until 1 p.m., and grab n' go open until 3 p.m.
- Dec 26: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Dec 27: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Dec 28: 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Dec 29: 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Dec 30: 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Dec 31: 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Jan 1: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Jan 2: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Navy Exchange Main Store

- Dec. 23: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- Dec. 24: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Dec. 25: Closed
- Dec. 26: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Dec. 31: 9 .m. to 7 p.m.
- Jan. 1: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Jan. 2: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Uniform Shop

- Dec. 24: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Dec. 25: Closed
- Dec. 26: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Dec. 31: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Jan. 1: Closed
- Jan. 2: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Navy Federal

Main Street branch:

- 23 December 0730 — 1300
- 24 December CLOSED
- 26 December CLOSED
- 30 December 0730 — 1300
- 31 December CLOSED
- 2 January CLOSED

NEX branch:

- 23 December 1000 — 1700 (normal)
- 24 December 0900 — 1200
- 26 December CLOSED
- 30 December 1000 — 1700 (normal)
- 31 December 0900 — 1400 (normal)
- 2 January CLOSED

Holiday Card Program Explained

By Joseph D. Nieves
WRNMMC Public Affairs

For several years, the American Red Cross in cooperation with Walter Reed National Military Medical Center holds a holiday card campaign. The campaign creates an organized way for the community to send holiday cards to patients and service members in a timely manner, allowing for those beneficiaries and troops to receive cards, as well as send those cards to their family and friends.

The annual campaign usually begins in early September and lasts until late November. This year's campaign ended Nov. 30.

Through the campaign, the ARC and WRNMMC receive an amazing outpouring of holiday cheer and well wishes and while that is heartwarming, it poses

some logistical challenges, according to Marin Reynes, ARC station manager at WRNMMC. Volunteers from the ARC inspect every card, numbering in the thousands every year, to ensure the safety and security of patients and their families, Reynes added.

Highly motivated volunteers and WRNMMC staff meet these challenges head on from the start of the campaign during the first week of September until its conclusion each holiday season. The end of November may seem early, but it helps staff and volunteers to make

sure patients have the cards in time to send them to family and friends, Reynes explained.

The biggest challenge to the holiday card campaign is old, outdated and purposefully misleading information circulated on social media and the internet. Each year the incorrect information goes viral and it becomes a major effort to correct the information in the hopes the WRNMMC community will not have their cards returned to them.

Unfortunately, WRNMMC staff has no control over cards sent to the wrong location.

There are alternatives in case your cards are returned or you missed the Nov. 30 deadline. The ARC at WRNMMC works closely with the WRNMMC staff and patients and may provide you alternatives. You can reach the ARC at 301-295-1538.

You may also want to consider veteran hospitals in your local area. Many of our service members and patients transition to those locations and reaching out to those facilities provides another way for your cards to reach service members and veterans.

The annual campaign usually begins in early September and lasts until late November.
This year's campaign ended Nov. 30.

The Impact of a Continuing Resolution on PCS Orders Timelines

By Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

The Navy announced today that Sailors should expect to receive orders with approximately two months lead time for permanent change of station (PCS) moves following passage of a second Continuing Resolution (CR) for Fiscal Year 17 that will fund the government through April 28, of next year.

“The Navy fully realizes that these shortened lead times limit Sailors’ time to prepare for moves, and burdens them and their families,” said Chief of Naval Personnel, Vice Adm. Robert Burke. “Going forward, we remain committed to providing Sailors with as much information and lead time as we can. Our goal remains to mitigate the CR’s impact on Sailors and their families, to the best of our ability. We ask for your patience as we work through the funding challenges.”

Due to the way resources are phased and allocated under a CR, the Navy currently does not have sufficient funds in our manpower accounts to allow for normal three to four month lead times for Sailors’ PCS orders.

While the Navy will make every effort to ensure that PCS orders are released in a timely manner, these fiscal challenges will result in compressed PCS timelines for Sailors. To date, NPC has received less funding than planned and the average lead time for PCS orders has decreased to approximately two months. Sailors who have not yet received orders will likely have less than two months lead time when the orders are released.

The Navy has utilized a prioritization strategy in previous PCS funding-constrained periods with the intent to minimize impact to Fleet readiness, career timing, and families. Emphasis will remain on global support assignment rotations, career milestone billets, critical readiness fills, minimizing gaps at sea for deployed units and those working up to deploy, and keeping the training pipelines moving. Those Sailors who are going to



U.S. NAVY PHOTO

operational units about to deploy, numbered fleet staffs, overseas billets, individual augmentees or must-moves (safety, early return of dependents, humanitarian) will be issued their orders first.

Additionally, Navy Personnel Command will continue to issue letters of intent for overseas moves. That way, while orders may not be in hand, individuals can start the process of doing overseas and medical screenings, dependent entry approval, passport applications and security clearance requests.

We encourage all Sailors with projected rotation dates during this fiscal year to contact their detailers with questions and concerns with the understanding that there may be a delay as we work through Sailors’ issues.

For more news from Chief of Naval Personnel, visit <http://www.navy.mil/local/cnp/>.

For more information, visit <http://www.navy.mil>

Walter Reed Officer Recognized For Work On Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria

By U.S. Military Health System Communications Office

Antibiotics are important to the care of service members, especially those returning from the battlefield. But the rise in antibiotic-resistant bacteria concerns Military Health System (MHS) officials who are closely monitoring the rising trend and working to combat it.

“Improvised explosive devices (IEDs) result in a great deal of infections,” said Army Lt. Col. Kurt Schaecher, chief of the Infectious Disease laboratory at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. “The fragments from the IEDs are not clean – they’re covered in dirt and whatever bacteria and fungi in the dirt with the IEDs and the shrapnel comes off and goes into the wounds. Patients get very deep-seated infections often resistant to many antibiotics at the same time, making it hard to treat.”

That’s why Schaecher was recognized for his work identifying the first colistin-resistant mcr-1 positive E. coli in a person in the United States in May 2016. He received the Healthcare Excellence in Patient Safety award at the AMSUS (the Society of Federal Health Professionals) meeting, Dec. 1, 2016, at National Harbor near Washington, D.C. Colistin is an antibiotic of last resort, and the mcr-1 gene that causes the resistance can be transferred to other bacteria. If that happens, it would render colistin ineffective. Often, these bacteria are already resistant to many other antibiotics.

“Colistin is an antibiotic we pulled out often during Operation Iraqi Freedom, because there was so much multidrug-resistant bacterial infections that came out of the service members who were wounded, which resulted in loss of limb,” said Schaecher.

The double-edged sword of antibiotics is on the one hand



PHOTO COURTESY OF AMSUS

Army Lt. Col. Kurt Schaecher (right), chief of the Infectious Disease laboratory at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, receives the Healthcare Excellence in Patient Safety award from Dr. Karen Guice (left), principal deputy assistant secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, performing the duties of the assistant secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, at the AMSUS (the Society of Federal Health Professionals) meeting, Dec. 1, 2016, at National Harbor near Washington, D.C.

they’re great at fighting infections; on the other hand, their overuse results in bacteria able to resist. The military’s concerns about this and a 2014 presidential executive order prompted the MHS to expand its efforts to stop the resistance. The Department of Defense enhanced surveillance for resistant bacteria, improved stewardship of new and existing antibiotics, and developed new diagnostic tests and treatments. All of this was done with international efforts in mind, given the worldwide footprint of the military.

Schaecher said the discovery of the gene is a good wake-up call to the state of antibiotic resistance in the U.S.

“Hopefully that wake-up call will push us to move forward with new, innovative therapies for bacterial

infections,” said Schaecher. “There are a lot of different efforts within the Department of Defense to develop

different therapies for drug-resistant bacteria. We’re hoping this furthers the actions on this subject.”



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Murtha Cancer Center Hosts Annual Lung Cancer Summit

By PO1 Chris Krucke
WRNMMC Public Affairs

For the past four years the John P. Murtha Cancer Center (MCC) of Excellence at Walter Reed Bethesda has hosted the Annual Lung Cancer Summit, and this year's event held last month, again put the spotlight on research, prevention, and treatment in the battle against lung cancer, the No. 1 cause of cancer deaths in the United States.

Navy Lt. Cmdr. (Dr.) Karen Zeman, chief oncology fellow at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, served as the event moderator. She explained the annual summit provides attendees, including health care providers, researchers, patients and their families, a forum to discuss the current and future state of lung cancer prevention, diagnosis and care.

"[It's about] what we here at Walter Reed Bethesda are doing in the fight against lung cancer, and how we can improve our treatment and multidisciplinary efforts at the MCC," she said.

Navy Capt. (Dr.) Joel A. Nations, WRNMMC director of medicine, and Lt. Cmdr. (Dr.) Corey Carter, chief of thoracic oncology, started the lung cancer summit in 2012, held annually during Lung Cancer Awareness Month in November.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer related deaths in the United States, according to the U.S. National Cancer Institute, and the summit at Walter Reed Bethesda gathers specialists at the MCC and organizations nationally to discuss recent discoveries and advances to improve the battle against the disease.

"We have sought leaders in the field of lung cancer to speak in regards to the latest innovations in the field and collaborations between our center and national centers and resources," Zeman said.

Fourteen speakers participated in this year's summit. They discussed a number of topics, including the "Evolving Face of Lung Cancer," "Lung Cancer Imaging," "Advances in Bronchoscopy" and the "Future of Lung Cancer Treatment."

Zeman said one point stressed often during the summit is "lung screening saves lives, is readily available [at WRNMMC], and can be ordered by any physician."

She added, "Lung cancer remains a disease with the highest cancer related mortality, but there is reason for hope as the field is exploding with innovative new treatments which are improving our understanding of this cancer, our patients' quality of life, and [extending] their lives."

The Murtha Cancer Center at Walter Reed Bethesda is a multiservice center "where military beneficiaries can receive exceptional care in all disciplines of cancer treatment," according to MCC director, Army Col. (Dr.) Craig D. Shriver.

"The over 330 board-certified oncologist and professional clinical and support staff are highly specialized in all aspects of cancer care — from first diagnosis, through therapy and follow-up care, to survivorship. We have enhanced our capabilities by teaming with the Uniformed Service University and the National Cancer Institute to provide excellent state-of-the-science cancer care," Shriver added.

COLUMN

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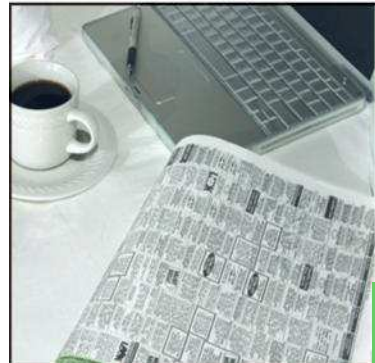
When Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus visited Walter Reed Bethesda earlier this month to thank the Walter Reed Bethesda staff for what you do, he called you, "professional, caring, [and] compassionate, and the country simply doesn't know how good you are at what you do, and how dependent we are on what you do. You've chosen to serve this country [and] your fellow service members, and there is no greater purpose in life than what you're doing here." I could not agree more.

Looking forward, WRNMMC will

continue to lead the way in health care delivery, research and education. Beginning the year, we will also provide four medical aid stations for the 2017 Inauguration, as well as provide medical support for other events in the NCR, including the annual Army 10-Miler and Marine Corps Marathon.

As you take pride in what you have accomplished in 2016, please set new goals, just as loftier as those you set and accomplished in 2016, for 2017. Also, as you celebrate the holidays, please do so safely.

On behalf of myself, Command Master Chief Willis, and our families, we wish you all a very Happy and Joyous Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.



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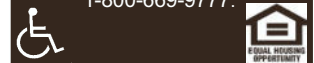
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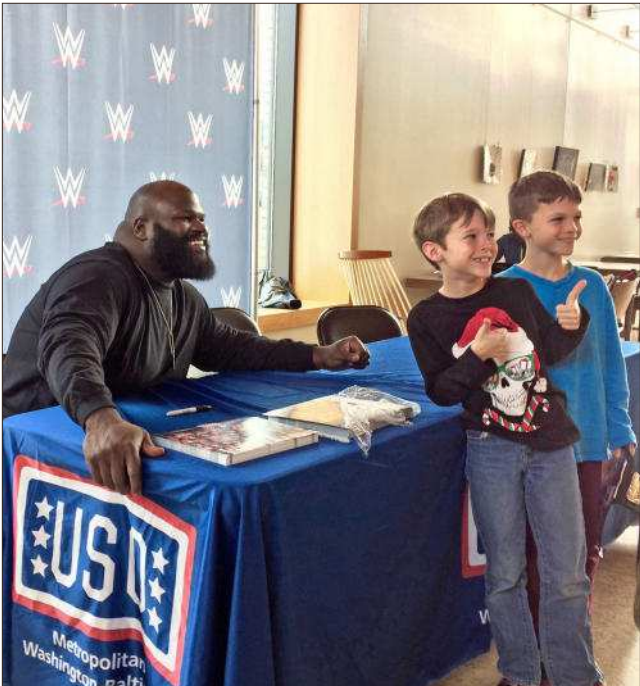
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WWE Superstars Visit NSAB

Photos by Andrew Damstedt

WWE Superstars met with service members and their families at the USO Warrior and Family Center at Bethesda. They also made stops at the prosthetics lab in Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and played wheelchair basketball in Naval Support Activity Bethesda's gymnasium.



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